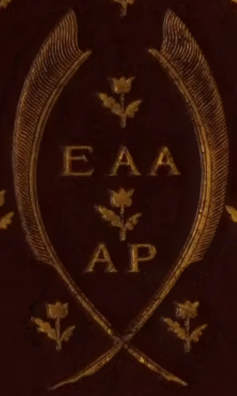
THE QVIET LIFE



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"THE QUIET LIFE"

CERTAIN VERSES BY VARIOUS HANDS: the Motive set forth in a PROLOGUE & EPILOGUE by AUSTIN DOBSON; the whole adorned with numerous Drawings by EDWIN A. ABBEY & ALFRED PARSONS

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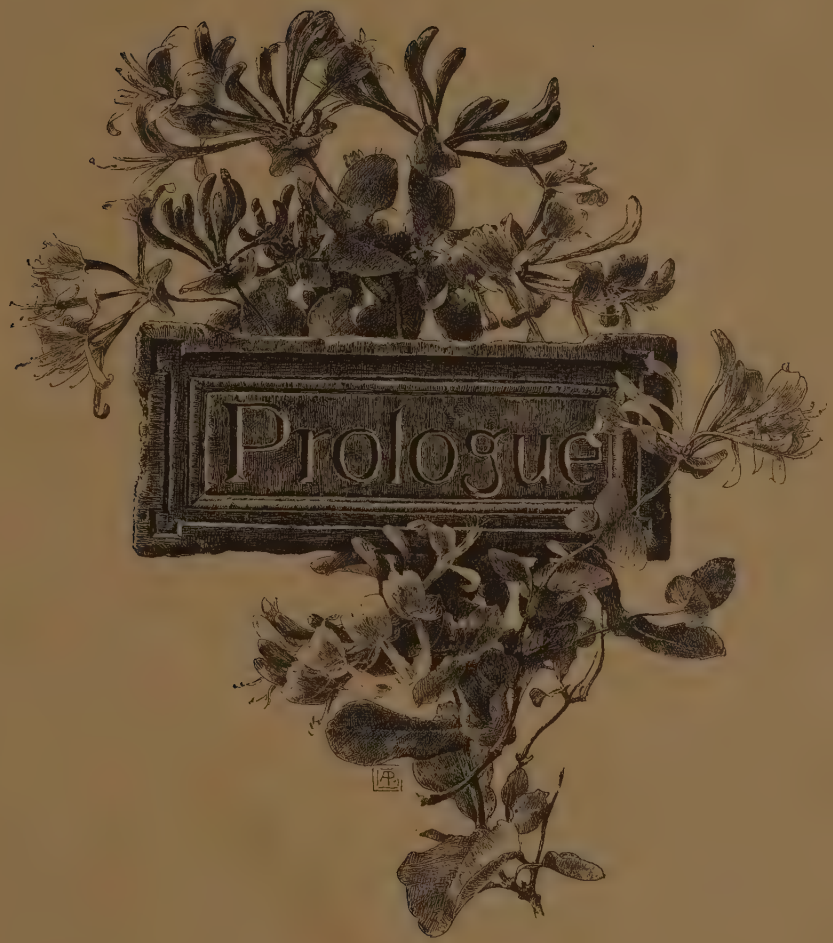

Prologue

EVEN as one in city pent,
Dazed with the stir and din of town,
Drums on the pane in discontent,
And sees the dreary rain come down,
Yet, through the dimmed and dripping glass,
Beholds, in fancy, visions pass,

Of

Of Spring that breaks with all her leaves,
Of birds that build in thatch and eaves,
Of woodlands where the throstle calls,
Of girls that gather cowslip balls,

Of

Of kine that low and lambs that cry,
Of wains that jolt and rumble by,
Of brooks that sing by brambly ways,
Of sunburned folk that stand at gaze,

Of

Of all the dreams with which men cheat
The stony sermons of the street,
So, in its hour, the artist brain
    Weary of human ills and woes,
Weary of passion and of pain,
    And vaguely craving for repose,

Deserts

Deserts awhile the stage of strife
To draw the even, ordered life,
The easeful days, the dreamless nights,
The homely round of plain delights,
The calm, the unambitioned mind,
Which all men seek, and few men find.

THE QVIET LIFE

Thoughts in
a Garden

THE GARDEN.

BY ANDREW MARVELL.

HOW vainly men themselves amaze,
To win the palm, the oak, or bays:
And their incessant labours see
Crown'd from some single herb, or tree,
Whose short and narrow verged shade
Does prudently their toils upbraid;
While all the flow'rs, and trees, do close,
To weave the garlands of repose.

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence, thy sister dear!
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companys of men.

Your

Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow.
Society is all but rude
To this delicious solitude.

No white, nor red was ever seen
So am'rous as this lovely green.
Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
Cut in these trees their mistress' name,
Little, alas! they know or heed,
How far these beautys her exceed!
Fair trees! where'er your barks I wound,
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passion's heat,
Love hither makes his best retreat.
The gods, who mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race.
Apollo hunted Daphne so,
Only that she might laurel grow:
And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What

What wond'rous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head.
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine.
The nectarine, and curious peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach.
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Insnar'd with flow'rs, I fall on grass.

Mean while the mind, from pleasure less,
Withdraws into its happiness:
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does streight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

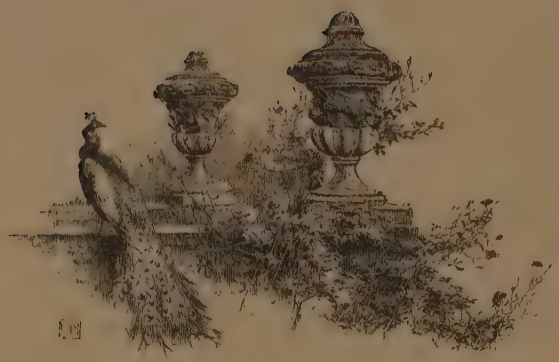
Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide:

There,

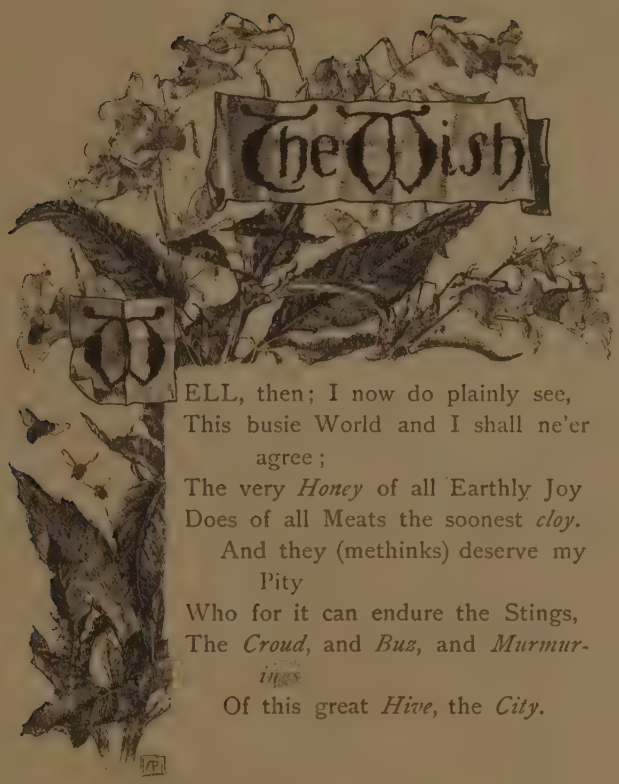
There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
Then whets, and claps its silver wings:
And, till prepar'd for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy garden-state,
While man there walk'd without a mate:
After a place so pure and sweet,
What other help could yet be meet!
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there:
Two paradises are in one,
To live in paradise alone.

How well the skilful gard'ner drew
Of flow'rs, and herbs, this dial new!
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run:
And, as it works, th' industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholsome hours
Be reckon'd but with herbs and flow'rs?



THE WISH.

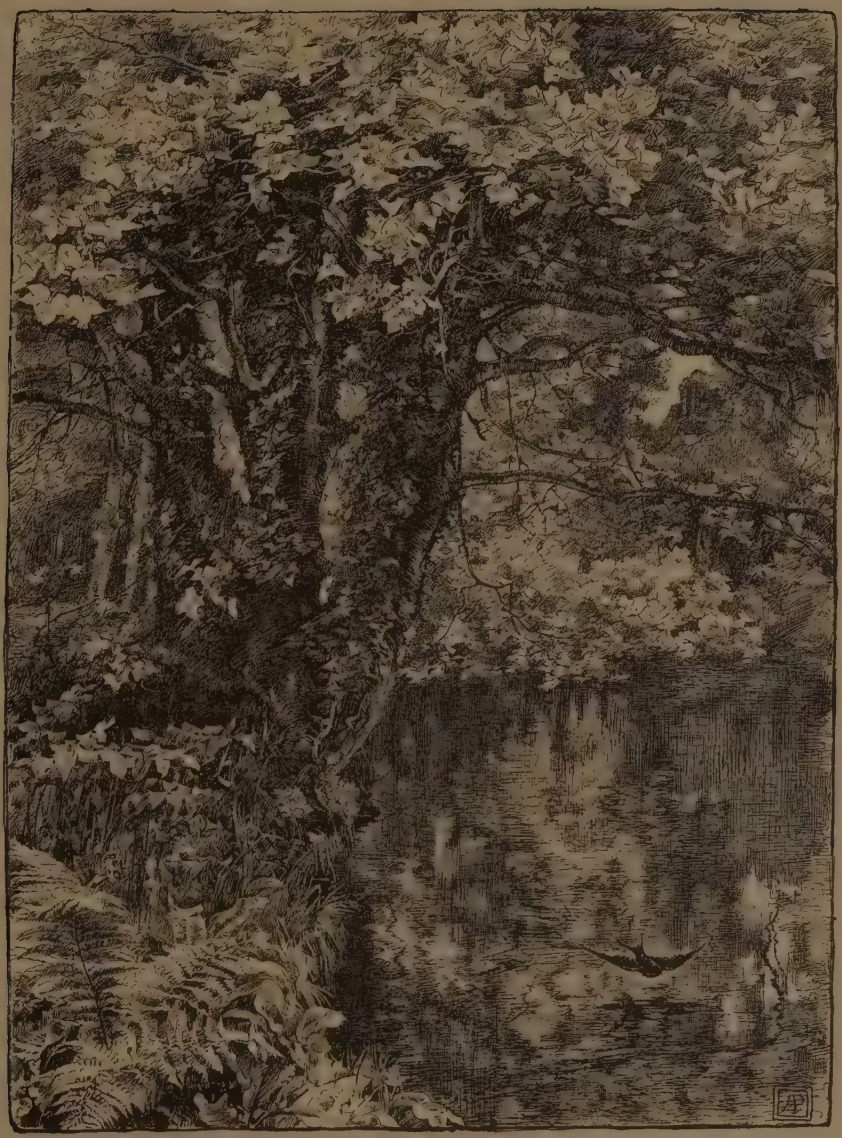


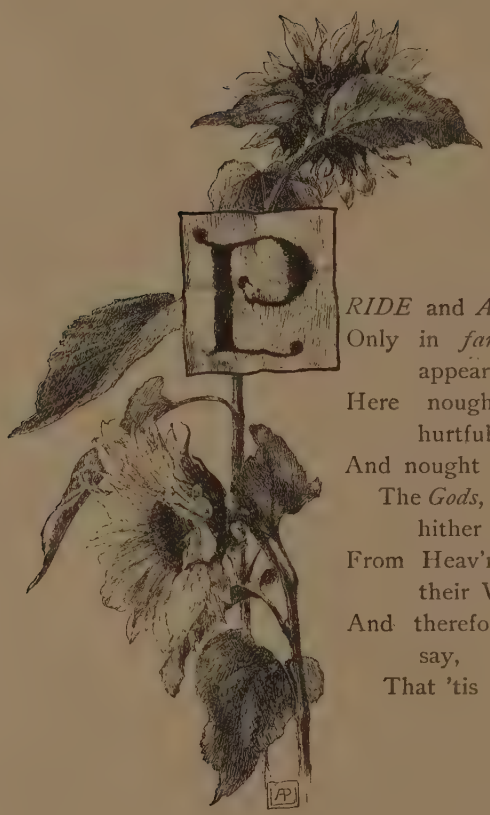
WELL, then; I now do plainly see,
This busie World and I shall ne'er agree;
The very *Honey* of all Earthly Joy
Does of all Meats the soonest *cloy*.
And they (methinks) deserve my Pity
Who for it can endure the Stings,
The *Croud*, and *Buz*, and *Murmurings*
Of this great *Hive*, the *City*.

AH!

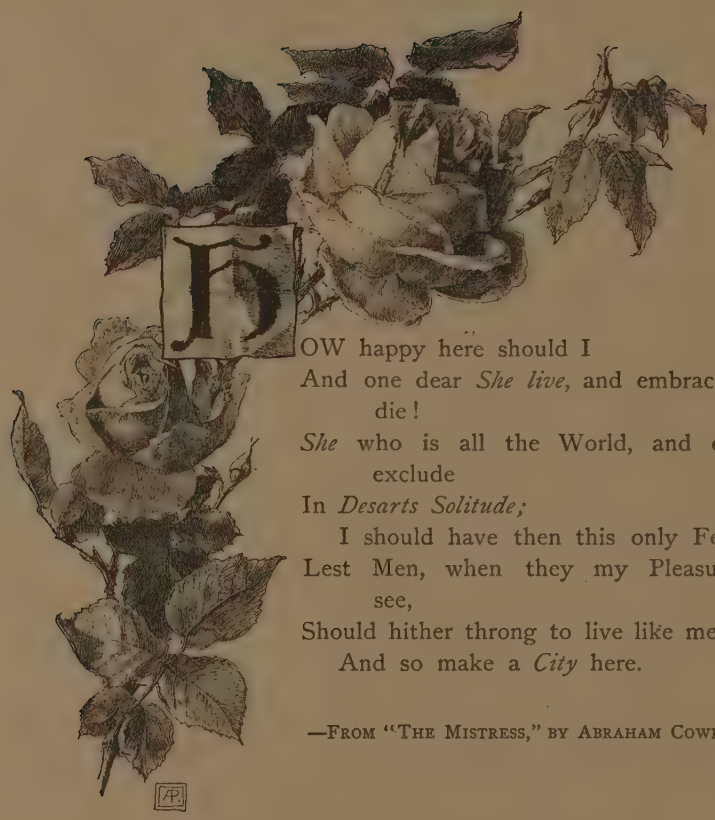
OH! yet, ere I descend to the
Grave,
May I a *small House* and *large Garden*
have!
And a *few Friends*, and *many Books*,
both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too!
And since *Love* ne'er will from me
flee,
A *Mistress* moderately fair,
And good as *Guardian-Angels* are,
Only belov'd, and loving me!

O H *Fountains!* when in you shall I
Myself, eas'd of unpeaceful Thoughts, espy?
Oh *Fields!* oh *Woods!* when, when shall I be made
The happy *Tenant* of your shade?
Here's the Spring-head of *Pleasure's* Flood,
Where all the *Riches* lye that she
Has coin'd and stamp'd for Good.





RIDE and *Ambition* here
Only in *far-fetch'd Metaphors* appear;
Here nought but *Winds* can hurtful *Murmurs* scatter,
And nought but *Eccho flatter.*
The *Gods*, when they descended hither
From Heav'n, did always chuse their Way;
And therefore we may boldly say,
That 'tis the *Way* too *thither.*



HOW happy here should I
And one dear *She live*, and embracing die!
She who is all the World, and can exclude
In *Desarts Solitude;*
I should have then this only Fear,
Lest Men, when they my Pleasures see,
Should hither throng to live like me,
And so make a *City* here.

—From "The Mistress," by Abraham Cowley.

QUINCE.

QUINCE.

BY WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED.

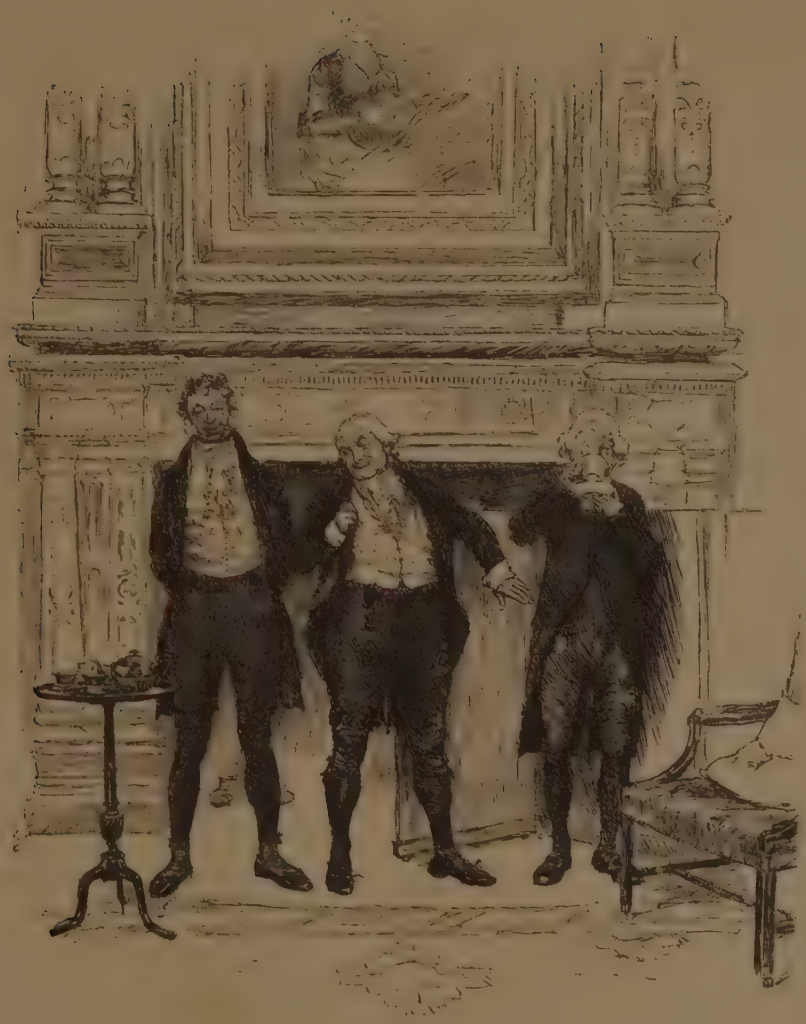
NEAR a small village in the West,
Where many very worthy people
Eat, drink, play whist, and do their best
To guard from evil church and steeple,
There stood—alas! it stands no more!—
A tenement of brick and plaster,
Of which, for forty years and four,
My good friend Quince was lord and master.

Welcome

Welcome was he in hut and hall,
To maids and matrons, peers and peasants;
He won the sympathies of all
By making puns and making presents.
Though all the parish were at strife,
He kept his council and his carriage,
And laugh'd, and loved a quiet life,
And shrank from chancery suits and marriage.

Sound was his claret—and his head;
Warm was his double ale—and feelings;
His partners at the whist club said
That he was faultless in his dealings.
He went to church but once a week;
Yet Dr. Poundtext always found him
An upright man who studied Greek,
And liked to see his friends around him.

Asylums,



Asylums, hospitals, and schools
He used to swear were made to cozen;
All who subscribed to them were fools—
And he subscribed to half a dozen.

It

It was his doctrine that the poor
Were always able, never willing;
And so the beggar at his door
Had first abuse, and then a shilling.

Some public principles he had,
But was no flatterer nor fretter;
He rapp'd his box when things were bad,
And said, "I cannot make them better!"
And much he loathed the patriot's snort,
And much he scorn'd the placeman's snuffle,
And cut the fiercest quarrels short
With "Patience, gentlemen, and shuffle!"

For

For full ten years his pointer Speed
Had couch'd beneath her master's table;
For twice ten years his old white steed
Had fatten'd in his master's stable.
Old Quince averr'd, upon his troth,
They were the ugliest beasts in Devon;
And none knew why he fed them both
With his own hands six days in seven.

Whene'er they heard his ring or knock,
Quicker than thought the village slatterns
Flung down the novel, smoothed the frock,
And took up Mrs. Glasse and patterns.
Adine was studying baker's bills;
Louisa look'd the queen of knitters;
Jane happen'd to be hemming frills;
And Bell by chance was making fritters.

But

But all was vain; and while decay
Came like a tranquil moonlight o'er him,
And found him gouty still and gay,
With no fair nurse to bless or bore him,
His rugged smile and easy-chair,
His dread of matrimonial lectures,
His wig, his stick, his powder'd hair,
Were themes for very strange conjectures.

Some sages thought the stars above
Had crazed him with excess of knowledge;
Some heard he had been crost in love
Before he came away from college;
Some darkly hinted that his Grace
Did nothing great or small without him;
Some whisper'd with a solemn face
That there was "something odd about him!"

I found

I found him, at threescore and ten,
A single man, but bent quite double:
Sickness was coming on him then,
To take him from a world of trouble.
He prosed of slipping down the hill,
Discovered he grew older daily:
One frosty day he made his will;
The next he sent for Doctor Bailey.

And so he lived, and so he died!—
When last I sat beside his pillow,
He shook my hand, and "Ah!" he cried,
"Penelope must wear the willow.
Tell her I hugg'd her rosy chain
While life was flickering in the socket;
And say that when I call again,
I'll bring a license in my pocket.

"I've

"I've left my house and grounds to Fag—
I hope his master's shoes will suit him;
And I've bequeathed to you my nag,
To feed him for my sake, or shoot him.
The vicar's wife will take old Fox—
She'll find him an uncommon mouser;
And let her husband have my box,
My Bible, and my Assmanshauser.

"Whether I ought to die or not,
My doctors cannot quite determine;
It's only clear that I shall rot,
And be, like Priam, food for vermin.
My debts are paid; but nature's debt
Almost escaped my recollection:
Tom! we shall meet again; and yet
I cannot leave you my direction."

THE VICAR.

THE VICAR.

BY WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED.

SOME years ago, ere time and taste
Had turned our parish topsy-turvy,
When Darnel Park was Darnel Waste,
And roads as little known as scurvy,
The man who lost his way between
St. Mary's Hill and Sandy Thicket
Was always shown across the green,
And guided to the Parson's wicket.

Back flew the bolt of lissom lath;
Fair Margaret, in her tidy kirtle,
Led the lorn traveller up the path,
Through clean-clipt rows of box and myrtle;

And

And Don and Sancho, Tramp and Tray,
Upon the parlour steps collected,
Wagged all their tails, and seem'd to say—
"Our master knows you—you're expected."

Uprose

Uprose the Reverend Dr. Brown,
Uprose the Doctor's winsome marrow;
The lady laid her knitting down,
Her husband clasped his ponderous Barrow;
Whate'er the stranger's caste or creed,
Pundit or Papist, saint or sinner,
He found a stable for his steed,
And welcome for himself, and dinner.

If, when he reached his journey's end,
And warm'd himself in Court or College,
He had not gained an honest friend,
And twenty curious scraps of knowledge,—
If he departed as he came,
With no new light on love and liquor,—
Good sooth, the traveller was to blame,
And not the Vicarage, or the Vicar.

His talk was like a stream which runs
With rapid change from rocks to roses:
It slipt from politics to puns,
It pass'd from Mahomet to Moses;
Beginning with the laws which keep
The planets in their radiant courses,
And ending with some precept deep
For dressing eels, or shoeing horses.

He

He was a shrewd and sound Divine,
Of loud Dissent the mortal terror;
And when, by dint of page and line,
He 'stablish'd Truth, or startled Error,
The Baptist found him far too deep,
The Deist sigh'd with saving sorrow,
And the lean Levite went to sleep,
And dream'd of tasting pork to-morrow.

His sermon never said or show'd
That earth is foul, that Heaven is gracious,
Without refreshment on the road
From Jerome or from Athanasius:

And

And sure a righteous zeal inspired
The hand and head that penn'd and plann'd them,
For all who understood admired,
And some who did not understand them.

He

He wrote, too, in a quiet way,
Small treatises, and smaller verses,
And sage remarks on chalk and clay,
And hints to noble Lords—and nurses;
True histories of last year's ghost,
Lines to a ringlet or a turban,
And trifles for the Morning Post,
And nothings for Sylvanus Urban.

He did not think all mischief fair,
Although he had a knack of joking;
He did not make himself a bear,
Although he had a taste for smoking;
And when religious sects ran mad,
He held, in spite of all his learning,
That if a man's belief is bad,
It will not be improved by burning.

And

And he was kind, and loved to sit
    In the low hut or garnish'd cottage,
And praise the farmer's homely wit,
    And share the widow's homelier pottage:
At his approach complaint grew mild;
    And when his hand unbarr'd the shutter,
The clammy lips of fever smiled
    The welcome which they could not utter.

He always had a tale for me,
    Of Julius Cæsar, or of Venus;
From him I learnt the rule of three,
    Cat's-cradle, leap-frog, and *Quæ genus:*
I used to singe his powder'd wig,
    To steal the staff he put such trust in,
And make the puppy dance a jig,
    When he began to quote Augustine.

Alack

Alack the change! in vain I look
For haunts in which my boyhood trifled—
The level lawn, the trickling brook,
The trees I climb'd, the beds I rifled:
The church is larger than before;
You reach it by a carriage entry;
It holds three hundred people more,
And pews are fitted up for gentry.

Sit in the Vicar's seat: you'll hear
The doctrine of a gentle Johnian,
Whose hand is white, whose tone is clear,
Whose phrase is very Ciceronian.
Where is the old man laid?—look down,
And construe on the slab before you,
"*Hic jacet Gvlielmvs Brown,*
Vir nullâ non donandus lauru."

ODE TO SOLITUDE.

ODE TO SOLITUDE.

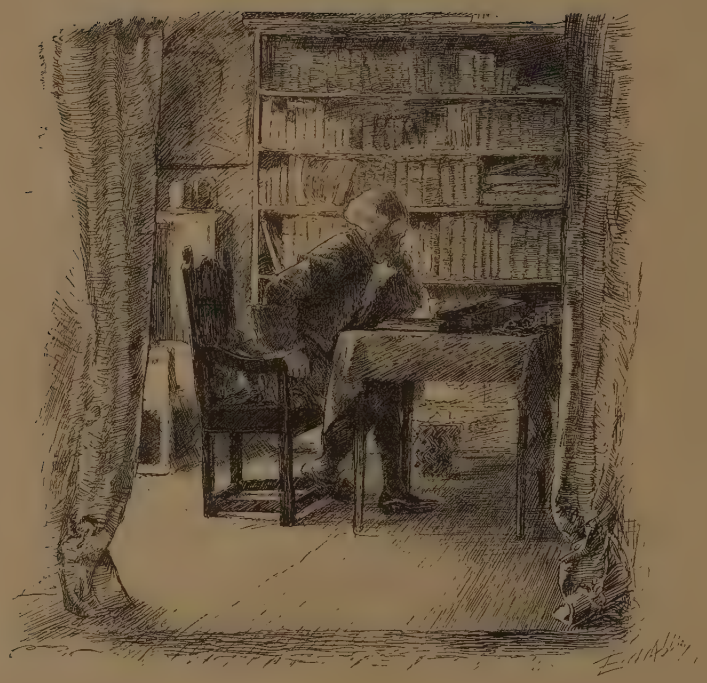
BY ALEXANDER POPE.

HAPPY the man whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air
In his own ground.

Whose

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire,
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter fire.

Blest,



Blest, who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years slide soft away,
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day.

Sound

E.A. 1853

Sound sleep by night; study and ease,
Together mixt; sweet recreation;
And Innocence, which most does please
With meditation.

Thus

W
N
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E. A. Abbey
'88

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown,
Thus unlamented let me die,
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.

THE MARRIED MAN.

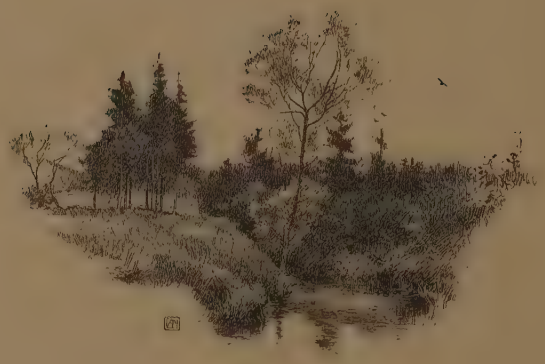
THE MARRIED MAN.

ONLY am the man,
Among all married men,
That do not wish the priest,
To be unlinked again.

And though my shoe did wring,
I would not make my moan,
Nor think my neighbor's chance
More happy than mine own.

Yet court I not my wife,
But yield observance due,
Being neither fond, nor cross,
Nor jealous, nor untrue.

MASTER ANTHONY STAFFORD.



TO MASTER ANTHONY STAFFORD.

BY THOMAS RANDOLPH.

COME, spur away,
I have no patience for a longer stay,
But must go down,
And leave the chargeable noise of this great town;
I will the country see,
Where old simplicity,
Though hid in grey,
Doth look more gay
Than foppery in plush and scarlet clad.
Farewell, you city wits, that are
Almost at civil war;
'Tis time that I grow wise, when all the world grows mad.

More of my days
I will not spend to gain an idiot's praise;
Or to make sport
For some slight puisne of the Inns-of-Court.

Then,

Then, worthy Stafford, say,
How shall we spend the day?
With what delights
Shorten the nights?
When from this tumult we are got secure,
Where mirth with all her freedom goes,
Yet shall no finger lose;
Where every word is thought, and every thought is pure.
There

There from the tree
We'll cherries pluck, and pick the strawberry;
And every day
Go see the wholesome country girls make hay,
Whose brown hath lovelier grace
Than any painted face,
That I do know
Hyde Park can show.
Where I had rather gain a kiss than meet
(Though some of them in greater state
Might court my love with plate)
The beauties of the Cheap, and wives of Lombard Street.

But think upon
Some other pleasures: these to me are none.
Why do I prate
Of women, that are things against my fate?
I never mean to wed
That torture to my bed.
My muse is she
My love shall be.
Let clowns get wealth and heirs. When I am gone,
And the great bugbear, grisly death,
Shall take this idle breath,
If I a poem leave, that poem is my son.

Of

ALFRED PARSONS.

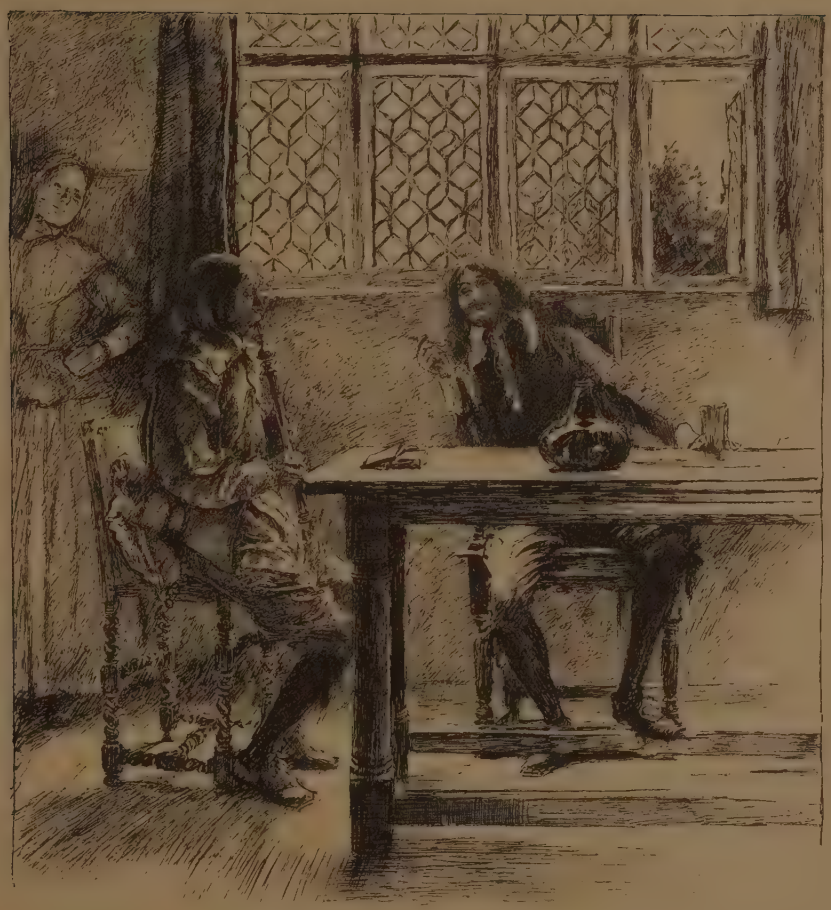
Of this no more;
We'll rather taste the bright Pomona's store.
No fruit shall 'scape
Our palates, from the damson to the grape.
Then (full) we'll seek a shade,
And hear what music's made;
How Philomel
Her tale doth tell,
And how the other birds do fill the quire:
The thrush and blackbird lend their throats,
Warbling melodious notes:
We will all sports enjoy which others but desire.

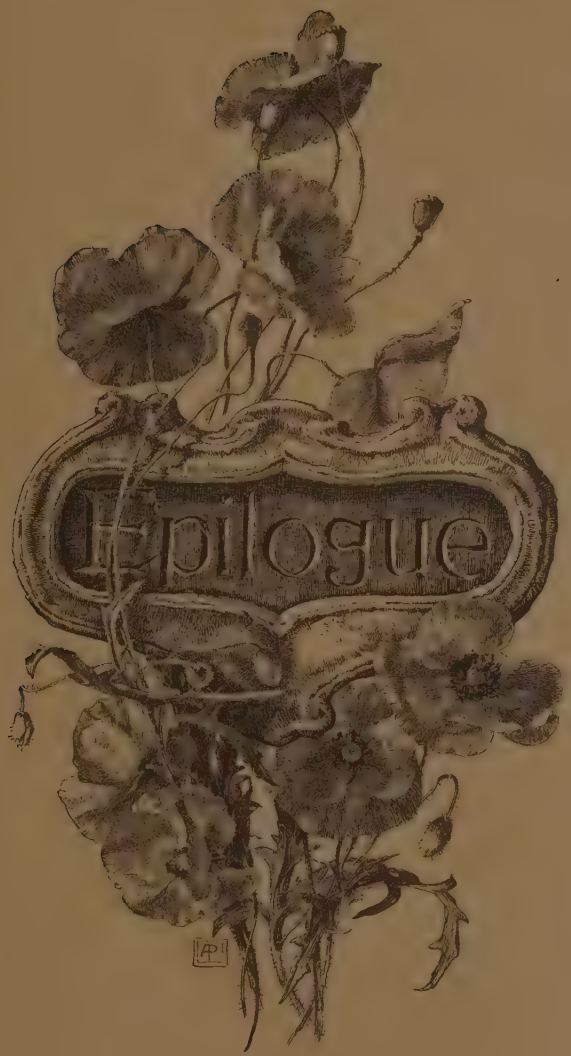
Ours

ALFRED PARSONS.

Ours is the sky,
Where at what fowl we please our hawk shall fly:
Nor will we spare
To hunt the crafty fox or timorous hare;
But let our hounds run loose
In any ground they'll choose;
The buck shall fall,
The stag, and all:
Our pleasures must from their own warrants be,
For to my muse, if not to me,
I'm sure all game is free:
Heaven, earth, are all but parts of her great royalty.

And when we mean
To taste of Bacchus' blessings now and then,
And drink by stealth
A cup or two to noble Barkley's health,
I'll take my pipe and try
The Phrygian melody;
Which he that hears
Lets through his ears
A madness to distemper all the brain.
Then I another pipe will take,
And Doric music make
To civilise with graver notes our wits again.




Epilogue

LET the dream pass, the fancy fade!
We clutch a shape, and hold a shade.
Is Peace *so* peaceful? Nay,—who knows!
There are volcanoes under snows.

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